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Bob Considine

Another Author Certain Oswald Had Accomplice

BECAUSE John Wilkes Booth was stupidly killed before he could be questioned or brought to proper trial charged with the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the succeeding century has been marked by the publication of countless books and tracts of speculation. One work published recently suggests that it was the work of the Jesuits, not Confederate diehards.

So it promises to be in the case of the murder of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Richard H. Popkin, presently on a sabbatical from his position as chairman of the Department of Philosophy, University of California at San Diego, has joined the ranks of Epstein, Lane, Rovere, Liddel, Hart and others who have damned the Warren Commission report. Like the others, he cannot name the accomplice or accomplices he is sure Lee Harvey Oswald employed during the deadly fusilade of Nov. 22, 1963.

Prof. Popkin's book, published in soft cover by Avon is "The Second Oswald."

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HAD A TALK with Popkin the other day and the general impression he leaves is that he believes wholeheartedly in his right to be skeptical about the honesty of the Warren report. Like the others, he calls for a new and thorough investigation and report on the assassination—one that will clear up what he feels are the official report's errors of commission and omission.

"It should be a non-government group," the dark-browed, bespectacled philosopher said. "The government is already a party to the case. It has a vested interest in protecting the view of the Warren Commission and the FBI's reputation for accuracy. The new commission should be composed of historians, lawyers and journalists. The matter is somewhere between a law case and an historical investigation. You need different standards, different approaches for each."

Inevitably, "The Second Oswald" leans heavily on the now well-known variance between the official autopsy report, as it appears in the 26-volume Warren Commission findings, and the FBI's autopsy report. The latter was written or dictated by two FBI agents who were present at the Bethesda Naval Hospital for a portion of the actual autopsy.

In brief, the official autopsy states that the bullet that seriously wounded Gov. John Connally of Texas first passed through the back of the president's neck and emerged through his Adam's apple.

The FBI report states (and a photo of the president's coat would seem to confirm) that a bullet struck the president some inches below the collar line, did not come out, and may have fallen out at the Dallas hospital to which he was rushed. A bullet from Oswald's rifle was found near the president's stretcher.

From this conflict, the skeptics have all concluded that (a) the Warren Commission sloughed over this FBI evidence too hurriedly, and (b) Oswald must have had an accomplice because he couldn't have done that much damage in those scarce seconds of firing.

* * *

HE MUST HAVE HAD one or even more accomplices, the Popkin book proposes. He has come to the conclusion, Popkin told me, that Oswald was a dupe of some much more sinister individual or group. This compelling influence on his life arranged for him to become involved in several damning situations BEFORE the day of the assassination: his one-man pro-Castro movement, Russian sojourn, the shot he took at Gen. Walker, and a mild brush with officer J. D. Tippit in a beanery a few days before the shots rang out.

Purpose of this, Popkin says blandly, was to make Oswald the most likely suspect to be picked up. The "second" Oswald, and perhaps the third and fourth are still loose, he feels.

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Mohr
Wick
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
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What are the facts

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